benefits to them including social security. The Central Government also offers a personal accident insurance social security scheme for poor families which also provides benefits to tendu leaf collectors.

Elimination of Child Labour

4946. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total number of child labourers in India;

(b) the total fund allocated by Government for elimination of child labour in India;

(c) what is the total amount India got from ILO and other international community for elimination of child labour; and

(d) how many children have comeback to the school after implementation of NECP and IPEC programme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) Authentic information of child labour is generated during the decennial census. As per the 1991 Census, the total number of working children in the country is 11.28 million.

(b) The Budget Estimate for child labour programmes during the current financial year 2000-2001 is Rs. 36 crores.

(c) and (d) As per the information received from ILO, the total expenditure/ commitment for implementation of 155 child labour projects under IPEC programme of ILO is of the order of US $ 74,05,011. About 90,500 children have been covered under the IPEC programme. Under the Scheme of NCLP, 92 National Child Labour Projects are in operation in 10 child labour endemic states for rehabilitation of 1.9 lakh children through special schools/ rehabilitation centres. As per information received from 21 NCLPs, about 13,500 children have been mainstreamed into formal school so far.

Threat to Singareni Collieries

4947. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Andhra Pradesh Government have requested to help the domestic coal industry like Singareni collieries to survive and ward of threat of large scale lay offs on account of imported coal coming very cheap; and

(b) if so, the action taken on the Chief Minister's letter dated 17th December, 1999?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) and (b) A letter dated 17.12.1999 was received from the Chief Minister, Andhra Pradesh. The letter, among other things, has sought certain procedural and legal changes through amendments to notifications issued under section 10(1) of the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970 to ensure that contractual operations in coal companies are made legally permissible to allow unhindered deployment of contract labour in various operations. It has also been suggested that this will help the domestic coal industry survive and ward off the threat of large scale lay offs on account of imported coal coming in very cheap.

The Central Government has considered the matter. It has been observed that keeping in view the decision of the Supreme Court in the matter of Air India Statutory Cooperation Vs. United Labour Union and Others to the effect that the Central Government, having abolished the contract labour, is denuded of its power to go once over into the self same question, amendment to the notifications, as suggested, would be non-est in law.

Welfare Schemes for Agriculture Labourers

4948. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any step to improve the life of the agricultural labourers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what are the welfare schemes for agricultural labourers prevailing in our country; and

(d) whether Government will put a comprehensive central legislation for agricultural labourers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) to (d) The Government is implementing a number of schemes for the welfare of rural workers including agricultural labour in the country like Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) and "Swarnjayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojna" (SGSY) which has been launched from April, 1999 by amalgamating certain earlier programmes